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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT. Tuesday, August 4, 1931.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Canning August Vegetables." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home."

Pleasant surprises were coming thick and fast around here yesterday. First, along came a brand new leaflet on dresses for little girls. If you have a little girl, you'll want that leaflet, I know. While I was looking at it admiringly, what should arrive but the revised canning bulletin right straight from the press. My, how glad I was to see that canning bulletin! You have no idea how many housekeepers have been writing for canning information this season. And until today, nary a bulletin had we had to send them. The pile of requests was growing so fast that it was in a fair way to reach the ceiling. But I'm pleased to report that already one of the new copies has started out, dressed in a brown paper envelope, to each home canner who wrote us a letter.

Today there are some canning questions to answer. Of course, when your bulletin arrives, it will answer all these questions for you, but in the meantime I'll reply by telling you what the specialists have to say.

The first question is about canning tomatoes. I'm pleased to talk on that subject, for I don't know of any more obliging and good-natured vegetables to can than tomatoes. I spoke of them as vegetables, didn't I? Most people consider them so. But I'm always in doubt as to whether they are really vegetables or fruit or both. Fifty years or so ago they were called love-apples. That sounds like a name for a fruit, doesn't it? And nowadays since they are being used more and more for chilled drinks and cocktails, they seem again to fit in the ranks of fruits. Well, I leave it to you what class they really belong to. Of one thing, however, I'm certain. That is, that when it comes to canning, tomatoes can certainly be treated like fruits and canned by the same method. Because they contain acid, as fruits do, they are one of the easiest of all vegetables to can. You can put them up using a hot water bath and processing them at the temperature of boiling water. Quite a different matter, you see, from canning corn, beans and other non-acid vegetables which must be processed at a temperature higher than boiling water.

But even such amiable vegetables as tomatoes must be canned with care for success. Every step must be watched, if they are to keep their fine flavor and be safe from spoilage.

For canning, pick out firm, ripe tomatoes all of about the same size and shape. The odd ones---those that are too small or green on one side ---may be saved for catsup or tomato juice or puree. Avoid any that are over-ripe or even slightly decayed. They are not worth taking a chance on, since one small bad spot may spoil all the good tomatoes around it.

When you have selected your tomatoes for canning, put them in a wire basket and dip them in boiling water for a minute or so to loosen the skin. Then give them a quick dip in cold water. Drain off the water and core and peel them at once.

These peeled tomatoes must then be packed in the sterilized jars or cans as closely as possible. Fill the cans with hot tomato juice or with a hot thick sauce made from other tomatoes. Season each quart jar with one teaspoon of salt. Slip on the rubbers and adjust the caps. Set the jars on a rack in boiling water and process them 45 minutes. If you are using tin cans, allow a little less time in the hot bath. Cans Number 2 and 3 require only 35 minutes' processing.

The next question is about canning string beans. That is quite a different story. Beans are among the non-acid vegetables, so they must be processed at a temperature higher than boiling. And the only way to get that hot a temperature is under steam pressure. So we'll use a steam pressure cooker for our string beans. Pick them over carefully. If there happen to be any strings on them, remove them. Wash the beans carefully, and cut them into pieces of the desired size. Now get out your big kettle, and ---

Oh, dear, I made a mistake there. A dreadful mistake. I hope no household management specialist heard me say that about getting out the kettle. I really know better. The kettle ought to be already out. Before the canning is even started all the utensils that will be needed should be out and ready.

Well, to go on. Put the beans in an uncovered kettle, cover them with boiling water, and boil them for five minutes. Now, while they are still boiling hot, rush those beans right into the jars or cans. Fill up the jars with the water in which the beans were boiled, and add one teaspoon of salt to each quart. Process them immediately at 10 pounds pressure, or 240 degrees Fahrenheit. Quart glass jars take 40 minutes at this pressure; pint glass jars take 35 minutes; and No. 2 and No. 3 tin cans take 30 minutes.

Another questioner asks how many fruits and vegetables should be put up at home each year. That's a very difficult question. It depends on so many things. I think I'll answer it by telling you a story.

Once upon a time we had in our town an indefatigable and intemperate canner. I can tell you all about her now, because she has reformed and

doesn't mind. Some women, you know, go to extremes on tatting or crocheting or fancy work. Others over-indulge in fancy cookery. But Imogene Immel, the heroine of this story, took to canning one summer in a way that was shocking to behold. She canned by day and canned by night. She put up jams and jellies innumerable; and marmalades and mangoes; preserves and picallili; conserves and chutneys. She put up pickles galore---plain and fancy, sweet, sour, dill, mixed and oil.

All the fresh food from her garden went into the preserving kettle. Not a bit would she spare for her family to eat fresh. They say her husband pined for green beans and asparagus, so that it was pathetic to see him. And her children besought her for fresh tomatoes. But not a one did they get that whole summer---nor for many summers later.

Imogene canned so much, you see, that three years afterward her family were still trying to eat up the results of her labors. During the last year, I've been told in whispers, they had to live mainly on chow-chow and gherkins. As I say, Imogene has reformed long since, so I can tell this horrible tale without hurting her feelings.

She says that nowadays she has acquired some canning sense. I understand from her that this is much like common sense. She only cans what her family will need. She only cans food that can be put up cheaper at home than purchased. She gives her family plenty of fresh vegetables all summer. And, whenever possible, she uses fresh and stored vegetables in winter. No use going to the labor of canning, says Imogene, unless it is a real economy, or unless it will provide food that the family could not have otherwise.

In planning your canning, it's a good idea to remember that necessities are the things to put up first and luxuries afterward. Ideally each member of the family should have two servings of fruit and two of vegetables every day during the year. If plenty of plain canned food is put up to supply this need, luxuries like pickles, and jellies and fancy relishes can be added to the canning program. But these should not occupy the largest share of the housewife's attention during canning season, or the growing children in the family may be deprived of the minerals and vitamins they need for health.

Tomorrow, we'll discuss styles for the small daughter's wardrobe.